

# DENON AVR-3313



**Denon**  
**AVR-3313**  
**networked AV receiver**  
Price: \$1799

While AV receivers quite often offer video to a second zone, they usually have a significant weakness in this endeavour: to make use of them you need to have lots more connections and very careful setting up. But with the addition of one output socket, the AVR-3313 overcomes all that.

## EQUIPMENT

As far as I have been able to work out, there has never yet been a receiver capable of converting an HDMI video input backwards (as it were) to some kind of analogue format, so the provision of composite or even component video outputs for Zone 2 (which this receiver also has) hasn't been of much use unless the source intended to be used in that zone was connected by analogue. That made for complicated wiring, and even difficulties with some source equipment with which you had to choose between HDMI and analogue output.

So this receiver at last allows multizoners to go almost entirely HDMI, which means that your other room TV can get full 1080p and all the other qualities provided by this standard.

So this receiver offers *three* HDMI outputs — two main zone outputs (for TV and projector, perhaps) plus one for the second zone. There are a total of seven HDMI inputs with one on the front.

The receiver has seven power amplifier channels, each rated at 125 high-fidelity watts. There are the usual abilities to redirect some of these for bi-amplification or driving that second zone, for 7.1 channels with rear surround channels, or with front height channels, or for front wide channels (an Audyssey mode). There are 11 sets of speaker connections, so you can have three different modes wired up and then switch at will.

Composite and component video are supported, but not S-Video. There's a good range of control-type connections, plus you get an Ethernet port and a front-panel USB socket. You even get a moving magnet phono input.

An unusual connection is the Denon HD Link connection, which looks to be a fancier RCA socket. But it isn't for signal transfer. Instead it's for synchronisation. The receiver has a low jitter digital audio clock and a sync signal from this can be delivered via this socket back to certain Denon disc players, locking them into the same low jitter mode.

The Denon's network connectivity gives you some pretty good stuff. There is vTuner-based internet radio, plus DLNA support to play music (and photos, if you must) from other devices on your network. There is Last FM, Apple AirPlay and the hottest new thing — built-in Spotify music streaming (though with AirPlay here as well, you may find it more convenient to access Spotify on your iDevice and AirPlay it over to the receiver).

What you don't get is an AM tuner, so you'd do best to use the network connection and the internet radio to replace it.

The receiver supports 4K passthrough and has a setting to upconvert incoming video — HDMI or analogue — all the way to 4K itself.

## PERFORMANCE

A nice little wizard guides you through the set-up of the receiver. All of this worked smoothly except, arguably, the final step. At the end of the auto calibration not only does it switch on Audyssey Dynamic EQ (as with last year's model) but also had Audyssey Dynamic Volume set to 'Medium'. And it makes no mention of this during the calibration process; it offers no choice.

Having said that, Dynamic EQ did not sound as nasty as it did last year. Perhaps that's because we're more tolerant, or because they've changed the processing. Regardless, I switched it off pretty quickly and still insist



that if a receiver is going to adjust the sound it should make it very clear indeed that's what it's doing, and give you the chance to say no.

Anyway, either switch them off or experiment with them. They're under Setup|Audio|Audyssey. The setting seems individually adjustable for each input (after switching them off, I found they were still in place on a different input).

Which kind of brings me to this receiver's menu system. This is very comprehensive, and sits over the top of whatever video is playing (including 3D), darkening the video to ensure the text is clear. It is largely text based, cleanly rendered. But it is irritating in not allowing you to jump from the top of the menu list straight to the bottom. I like frequently consulting the comprehensive 'Information' screens, but this was somewhat of a trial since it was accessed via Setup|General (5 arrows down)|Information (9 arrows down).

But, hey, at least it does have this excellent information available!

The receiver can, as you'd expect, scale up both analogue and HDMI video to your preferred resolution (including 4K). This setting can be made individually for each input, which complicates setting up but provides excellent control. If you have progressive-scan conversion going then you can choose between three deinterlacing settings: Auto (the default), 'Film and Video', and Video. The last locks into video mode, while the first two both offered automatic cadence detection, switching between Film and Video modes as (so it thought) appropriate.

If there was any difference in operation between the Auto and the 'Film and Video' modes, then it was opaque to me. On 576i/50 content they were both a little more easily tricked than the norm into video mode when film mode would have been appropriate, but with 1080i/50 content both were excellent, with just one tiny instance of picture instability suggesting a momentary confusion. Consequently with HDTV this system gave excellent results.

The provision of an HDMI output for the second zone may well be very useful for some

owners. The primary purpose would be to run your source device's contents through to a second TV. This output also carries the audio so you don't even need a sound system for it. But one thing to bear in mind is that you may need to invest in HDMI extender technology for a long HDMI cable run, by which I mean anything much more than about 15 metres. You will also need to make arrangements for remote control. (The receiver has IR in and out sockets so you could run an IR repeater.)

The audio quality proved simply excellent (after switching off those Audyssey processes). The actual Audyssey EQ system is second to none in balancing the sound for a given room and speaker system. The amplifiers provided all that was needed for impressive power. Music, movies — this receiver was a delight.

The USB and DLNA network functions both support photos, but aren't worth the bother because any correspondence between the real aspect ratio of the photos and how they're displayed is purely coincidental, as it was last year. Oddly, if you use the Denon iOS app to control the receiver, then your iPhone will display them correctly on its screen.

Navigating through long lists — essential for useful network and USB support — is about as good as it gets using a home theatre remote. It loads them in fairly quickly and scrolling using the arrow keys is also reasonably rapid. Using the Channel/Page keys they're even faster. And if the list is really long (for example, you have all your songs displayed, or all the vTuner radio stations) then there's also a text search feature. The iOS app makes it even easier because you can jump straight to the initial letter of what you're looking for.

The front-panel USB provides excellent support for iPods and general USB memory. The music support for USB includes WAV, AAC, lossy (but not lossless) WMA, MP3 and FLAC. Indeed, it played back both a 24/96 stereo FLAC test track and a 24/192 version as well (although I cannot attest to it not reading only every second sample). But it played only two-channels of 24/96/5.1 FLAC.

The Denon Remote app for iOS seemed simple, perhaps a bit too much so. But it always

seemed to provide support relevant to the moment: carrying a reflection of long selection lists, which displayed quickly, thereby inviting use; popping up a text entry box and keyboard when appropriate.

But the best fun of all I had with this unit was my inaugural encounter with Spotify's music streaming system. You have to buy a premium subscription to this service to use it on the receiver (about \$12.00 a month) since the free version isn't supported. See last issue's big Spotify review for our full opinion of the service — it's not a complete system, in the sense of having all recorded music, but it is very nearly so. Searching for rare stuff, the misses I found were of the order of Baroque composer John Blow's *Chacone in G minor* (available on CD; I own it) and Joanna Newsom's independent folk/indie release *Ys*. By contrast the early 1950s Maria Callas *La Traviata* was sitting right there, ready for listening.

## CONCLUSION

Denon's AVR-3313 is a very solid AV receiver with an excellent feature set. Just consider whether or not you want those Audyssey sound processors running. *Stephen Dawson* +

## VERDICT

### Denon AVR-3313 networked AV receiver

Price: \$1799

- Top-notch home theatre performance
- Very good video handling
- Excellent network features
- Switches on Audyssey Dynamic EQ and Dynamic Volume without notification
- No AM tuner

**FIRMWARE:** 1490-0109-0000-3010-6737  
**POWER:** 7 x 125W watts, 8 ohms, 20-20,000kHz, 0.05% THD (two channels driven)  
**INPUTS:** 7 x HDMI, 2 x component video, 0 x S-Video, 4 x composite video, 6 x analogue stereo, 1 x phono, 0 x 7.1 analogue, 2 x optical digital, 2 x coaxial digital, 1 x USB, 1 x Ethernet  
**OUTPUTS:** 2 x HDMI, 1 x component video, 0 x S-Video, 2 x composite video, 1 x analogue stereo, 1 x 7.1 pre-out, 11 pairs speaker binding posts, 1 x 6.5mm headphone  
**ZONE:** 1 x HDMI, 2 x analogue stereo, 1 x composite video, 1 x component video (assignable), assignable amplifiers  
**OTHER:** 1 x IR in, 1 x IR out, 2 x trigger, 1 x RS-232C, 1 x Denon Link HD, 1 x setup mic  
**DIMENSIONS (whd):** 434 x 167 x 379mm  
**WEIGHT:** 12.0kg  
**WARRANTY:** Two years

**CONTACT:** Audio Products Group  
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**"The audio quality proved simply excellent (after switching off those Audyssey processes)."**



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